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ABSTRACT

As developed by the nonprofessional staff of St. Michael's College Library, Basic Rules of Alphabetic Sequence Simplified (BRASS) is a refined system of alphabetic filing for library card catalogs. It is designed to be a concise set of principles, consistently applied, making it therefore faster than other standard filing systems. BRASS consists of 12 rules, each illustrated by specific examples. Rules cover basic alphabetization, including foreign words, numerals, abbreviations, and acronyms; interfiling of types of entries; variant spellings; subfiling of identical entries, added entries, and multiple editions; and filing of cross references. (Author/SL)

ED107267

# BASIC RULES OF ALPHABETICAL SEQUENCE SIMPLIFIED

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THE LIBRARY
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## INTRODUCTION

BRASS is the development of the non-professional staff of St. Michael's College Library. It is a highly refined version of a system of filing for libraries developed by Director of the Library, Joseph T. Popecki, in 1960.

The advantage of the system here presented is that it is "natural,"; that is it adheres to the principle of alphabetical sequence, avoiding the intermixture of logic and numbers with alpha sequence. It also seeks to provide for solving the problems derived from inconsistent cataloging practices over the years.

By using a small number of fundamentally sound principles with virtually no exceptions, the filing rules are few in number and are easy to apply. In fact, filing by these rules is at least 50% faster than almost any standard system.

Having developed an adequate basic system, the Staff soon discovered that it was equally important that the application be accurate and consistent. Experimentation showed that remodeling one filing system into another resulted all too often in the failure to move cards into their proper new positions. Accuracy reached the theoretical perfect mark when the existing card catalog was first "scrambled" into random order, thus making each card placement a deliberate decision.

In practice, all multiple card sets were removed by hand, as were cross reference cards. An initial letter at a time, the remaining cards were mixed in a box, as if to pick the winner in a lottery. The actual refiling process was performed by eight people, working in teams of two. To assure that a team didn't slip into bad habits or unconsciously develop new rules, the team members exchanged regularly. Within a team, one person filed and the other "read" the filing; at intervals, the positions were reversed. When a problem came up, it was discussed by the whole team of eight and the resultant decision was known to all. If it meant retroactive correction of something already done, that was accomplished immediately.

The final result was reviewed by professional personnel in the Cataloging Department, who supervised day-to-day filing.

*Additional copies of this filing manual may be obtained for 25¢ from St. Michael's College Library, Winooski, VT 05404.*

March 1974

ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE LIBRARY
Winooski, Vermont

# BRASS

## (Basic Rules of Alphabetical Sequence Simplified)

*Devised for use with the library's card catalogs.

The order of letters used is that of the English alphabet.
A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z.
Some foreign languages using the western alphabet have some letters which file after Z. They are:

Danish and Norwegian - Æ, Ø, Å
Finnish - Ä, Ö
Hungarian - Zs
Swedish - Å, Ä, Ö

Polish does not use Q or V unless quoting another language. It uses KS to simulate X.

1. Arrange all entries, letter by letter to the end of each word, throughout the entry, ignoring all punctuation. A punctuation mark is considered a space except for the elision mark (') which has the function of joining two words.

   Examples:

   1 2 3 4 5 6 7
   Charles Louis de Bourbon, duke of Parma
   NEW YORK files before NEWARK

   | | | |
   |---|---|---|
   | Atlas, Charles | files as | Atlas Charles |
   | Atlas Cleaner | | Atlas Cleaners |

2. Interfile all entries, regardless of kind, in one alphabet. Although subject entries are usually typed in all upper case (ART), capitalization has no influence on word order.

   Examples:
   Green, Winifred
   The green years
   Greenaway, Kate, 1846-1901, illus.
   GREENBACKS
   Greenbaum, Joseph, joint author
   Greene, Mrs. Eunice (Chace)
   see
   Chace, Eunice
   GREENE, Nathaniel, 1742-1786.

   Interfile works by and about an author, whether personal or corporate. cf., Section 11, "Subfiling."

3. File all letters as you see them, disregarding all letter modifications, such as the umlaut (¨), cedilla (¸), tilde (˜), etc. Thus, ä files as a; ç files as c; ñ files as n, etc. However, note letters in preface which are not considered letter modifications and file after Z.

4a. All signs and symbols not letters or numbers arrange before numbers or letters.

   Example: In general, the filing order is:
   "nothing"
   signs or symbols
   numbers
   letters and words (alphabet)

* Developed and implemented by the para-professional staff of the library.

b. Initial numerals (numerals beginning an entry) are filed as numbers.
Example: 50 Paintings is filed before any alphabetical entries.

c. Roman numerals are equated to Arabic numerals for filing purposes.

d. Numerals which occur within the entry are filed as numerals and ahead of words (see filing order above).
Examples:
CHARLES
CHARLES V
CHARLES VIII
CHARLES VIII, EMPEROR OF GERMANY
CHARLES X
CHARLES OF GHENT

e. Do not attempt to interfile time periods expressed in words and numbers, such as:
U.S. - HISTORY - REVOLUTION
U.S. - HISTORY - 1783-1865.
or
U.S. - HISTORY - 1815-1861
U.S. - HISTORY - WAR OF 1812
File according to the above rule (4a) and make an appropriate cross reference, e.g., U.S. - HISTORY - 1783-1865
*see also*
U.S. - HISTORY - REVOLUTION

5. Initials and Acronyms.
Arrange initials standing for proper names as if each was a word, whether punctuated or not. *1 2 3*
Examples:
A. B. Smith
*1 2 3*
Jones, C B

Arrange initials standing for other words as acronyms, and interfile with acronyms as whole words.
Examples:
A. A.
A. B. Smith
Aa, Cornelis, van der
ABC of the N.R.A.
AMACO
Ambach, E L
Ambach, Eugene F.
When acronyms or intials exist also as the words or phrases for which they stand, make appropriate cross reference
Examples:
UNESCO
*see also entries beginning*
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culturla Organization
or
American Library Association
*see also entries beginning*
ALA

6. Arrange abbreviations as if spelled out in the language of the abbreviations.
Examples:
Col. files as Colonel
Gt. Brit. files as Great Britain
Mlle. files as Mademoiselle
U.S. files as United States
Mrs. is filed as spelled. NOTE: Abbreviations of geographical names are never considered as initials for filing purposes.

7a. File elisions and contractions as seen.
- File as a single word when the prefix or elided term is separated by an apostrophe.
  File "d'histoire" as "dhistoire" and "aren't" as "arent"
- File ampersands (&) and other conjunctive marks (+) as if spelled out in the language of the sentence, thus:
  "England & Germany" is filed "England and Germany"

7b. Proper names with prefixes are filed as single words, interfiled with variations of the name spelled the same way.

Example: Interfile Van Der Veer, Van Derveer, Vanderveer or La Fayette, Lafayette

Do not file with the variant spelling, Vanderver.

Compound last names are filed as two words:

| Example: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Smith, Charles | | Smith Charles |
| Smith-Jones, Peter | filed as | Smith Jones Peter |
| Smith, William | | Smith William |

8a. When names or other words are spelled in two or more ways, file each as spelled and make cross reference(s) to the variant spellings. Examples:

| O'Neill | McFarland | LABOR |
|---|---|---|
| *Entries under this name follow* | *Entries under this name follow* | *See also* |
| *See also name spelled* | *See also name spelled* | LABOUR |
| O'Neal | MacFarland | |
| O'Neale | McFarlan | |
| O'Neil | | |

Include only those variations actually in the catalog.

8b. Interfile variant spellings of the same person's name:

Examples: Homer and Homerus
Augustine and Augustinus
Smith, D L and Smith, David Lawrence

9a. When there are several editions of the same work, with identical entries and titles, file in chronological order.
When entries, titles and publication dates are identical, file alphabetically by publisher.

9b. Interfile fully transcribed titles with other printings or editions which the cataloger has elided or shortened in transcription. This rule does not apply to titles which have been changed or altered in successive editions.

10. Things to ignore in filing.
- Ignore the initial article in the nominative case in all languages unless the article is elided with a noun (c.f. Rule #7). See appendix one for foreign language initial articles that may be ignored. Be careful to distinguish in foreign languages the word that can be either a numeral or a definite article, such as the French "un" or "une." When the sense of the entry declares it to be a numeral, it must be regarded in filing.
- Ignore initial abbreviations denoting royal nature, such as: K., K.K., I.R., etc. (Kaiserlich, Imperiale, Reale, etc.).
- Ignore dates, appellatives or qualifications when arranging works by the same author except when the appellative is the only means of distinguishing two different names.

Example: Interfile - Guardini, Romano, 1885-
Guardini, Rev. Romano
Guardini, Romano
Guardini, Romano, joint author

- Ignore directional words in the filing of cross references such as "see" and "see also."
- Ignore filing or conventional titles* that do not appear between the entry and the transcribed title:

Example:

Copland, Aaron, 1900-
[Concerto, piano, (1926)]
Piano concerto (Jazz concerto)...

Ignore → Works. 1927.

Shakespeare, William
The complete works of William Shakespeare.

- Ignore punctuation and capitalization as filing factor.

11a. Sub-filing Arrangements.
How to arrange cards whose entries are identical.
A. If the main entry is an author:
Subfile by the title. Arrange identical titles by edition, then by date in chronological order.
Example:

2 Beard, Charles Austin, 1877
A basic history of the United States...

1 Beard, Charles Austin, 1877
American in mid-passage....

In arranging works by the same author, ignore dates, appellatives and other qualifications (Mr., Bro., joint author, illustrator, etc.) as filing terms (c.f. rule #10).

11b. Added Entries
(1) If the added entry is an author, editor, illustrator, compiler, corporation, etc.:
Subfile by the title; ignore the main entry author. (Crossing out with pencil line makes it clearer to use.)

Campbell, Robert Jean, joint author

~~Hinsie, Leland Earl, 1895-~~
Psychiatric dictionary....

(2) If the added entry is a title:
Subfile by the main entry.

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* It may not be practical to ignore filing titles in very large collections.

Example:

PAPER MAKING AND TRADE - HISTORY

2 Pizzetta, Jules, 1820-1900
Histoire d'une feuille de papier.
Paris, Brunet, 1868.

PAPER MAKING AND TRADE - HISTORY

1 Hunter, David, 1883-1950
Papermaking through eighteen centuries...
New York, W. E. Rudge, 1930.

(4) If the added entry is a subject heading consisting of an author and a title:
Subfile the author's name by the title in the added entry and interfile with cards for the author as a main entry.

Example:

Ⓐ *1* Augustinus Aurelius, St., Bp. of Hippo.
*2* Confessions. Translated by E. B. Pussey. New York, Dutton, 1950.

Ⓑ *1* AUGUSTINUS AURELIUS, ST., BISHOP OF HIPPO. *2* CONFESSIONS.

Harvey, John Francis, 1918-
Moral theology of the Confessions of St. Augustine. Washington, The Catholic University of America, 1971.

Ⓒ *1* Augustinus Aurelius, St., Bp. of Hippo.
*2* The Confessions of St. Augustine, translated by F.J. Sheed. New York, Sheed & Ward, 1953.

12. Filing of cross references.
- Subjects. File *see* and *see also* references to other sources of information <u>after</u> entries under the subject or identical titles.
- Names. File *see also* references to variations in the spelling of names, using the following printed form, in <u>front</u> of cards with the first-filed spelling.

<u>Example:</u>

MacDonald

*Entries under this name follow. See also the name spelled*

McDonald
McDonall

<u>APPENDIX ONE</u> - Initial articles ignored in filing.

*Dutch:* de, het, 't, een, eene
*French:* l', le, la, les, un, une
*German:* der (masc. nom. only), die das, ein, eine
*Hungarian:* a, ez, egy
*Italian:* il, lo, i, gl', gli, la, le, l', un, uno, una
*Norwegian:* den, det, de, dei, en, ein, et (ei, e, eit)
*Portuguese:* o, a, os, as, um, uma
*Rumanian:* l, le, un, o
*Spanish:* el, los, la, las, un, uno, una, unas